

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed June 30, 2006 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejection(s) Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-12, 14-17, 19-20, and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Spillner et al. (U.S. pat. no. 6,236,178, "Spillner"). Applicant respectfully traverses.

The Office Action equates a power-assisted steering system with a haptic feedback device. This is untenable. A haptic-feedback device is one that is designed to provide a user with a haptic, or tactile sensation, for example to enhance the user's interactive experience with a device, such as a joystick, a control knob, and so forth. In the presently claimed case, an actuator is dedicated to this haptic feedback, and controlled to provide forces to the device such that haptic feedback is experienced by the user. A power-assisted steering system, on the other hand, is simply a mechanical (or electrohydraulic in the case of Spillner) device that amplifies a user's input in order to provide additional mechanical leverage for steering control of a vehicle. A power-assisted steering system is not designed to provide haptic feedback to the user, and does not have an actuator configured to provide haptic force such that user experiences haptic feedback. The disclosure in Spillner is devoid of any suggestion to contrary.

It will be appreciated that, according to the M.P.E.P., a claim is anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102 only if each and every claim element is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.¹ The foregoing discussion clearly indicates the contrary, and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection based on Spillner is respectfully urged.

¹ Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP) § 2131. See also *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Claims 20-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Takita (U.S. pat. no. 4,954,907).

Claim 20 has been amended to recite supplying current to an actuator of a haptic-feedback device. Takita is directed to a read-write head of a data recording disk unit. This is equally dissimilar from a haptic feedback device, and the discussion with respect to Spillner is applicable to Takita as well. The withdrawal of the rejection based on Takita is therefore respectfully requested.

Rejection(s) Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 2, 13 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Spillner et al. (U.S. pat. no. 6,236,178) in view of Takita (U.S. pat. no. 4,954,907).

As explained above, neither Spillner nor Takita disclose a haptic feedback device. Therefore, whether considered singularly or in combination, these references fail to disclose or suggest claims dependent claims 2, 13 and 21 which by definition include all the limitations of the base claims discussed above.

Claims 10 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Spillner et al. (U.S. pat. no. 6,236,178) in view of Cilluffo (U.S. pat. no. 6,078,160).

Cilluffo does not remedy the failure of Spillner to render teach or suggest claims 1 and 12, from which claims 10 and 18 depend, respectively. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 10 and 18 based on the combination Spillner and Cilluffo is improper and withdrawal of same is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

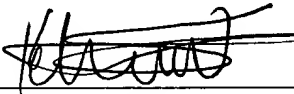
In view of the preceding discussion, Applicants respectfully urge that the claims of the present application define patentable subject matter and should be passed to allowance.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone call would help advance prosecution of the present invention, the Examiner is kindly invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number below.

Please charge any additional required fees, including those necessary to obtain extensions of time to render timely the filing of the instant Amendment and/or Reply to Office Action, or credit any overpayment not otherwise credited, to our deposit account no. 50-1698.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: 09/28/2006



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